



FEMA

Office of National Capital Region Coordination

Preparing for Hurricanes, Tropical Storms, and Other Severe Weather

Recommendations for Federal Departments and Agencies in the National Capital Region

In preparation for hurricanes, tropical storms, or other severe weather, federal departments and agencies in potentially affected areas should consider the following actions:

- ☐ Encourage all employees to visit [Ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) to learn about basic steps they can take to prepare for hurricanes and other disasters.
- ☐ Check or restock personal, home, and office emergency preparedness kits. For more information, see <http://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit/>.
- ☐ Update all emergency contact lists. If personnel will be evacuating or relocating, consider obtaining their temporary contact information (consistent with department or agency policies on collecting and storing employee information).
- ☐ Remind employees about any internal notification procedures or accountability procedures in place at your department or agency.
- ☐ Sign up for emergency text alerts from your local government. For links to the emergency alert systems used by local jurisdictions in the National Capital Region, visit www.capitalert.gov. Employees should sign up for emergency alerts from the communities where they work and where they live.
- ☐ Test Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS) cards, Wireless Priority Service (WPS), satellite phones, cell phone text messaging, and other alternative communication methods as available. (For information on GETS and WPS, visit www.ncs.gov.)
- ☐ Encourage personnel who have been issued laptops to take them home each night in case a quick evacuation or activation/deployment is necessary.
- ☐ Fully charge mobile phones, PDAs, handheld devices, satellite phones, and laptop computers. Charge spare batteries if available.
- ☐ Back up and secure files as necessary. Ensure classified information is secure.
- ☐ Review procedures for activating your continuity of operations (COOP) plan and/or relocating to an alternate operating facility. Consider pre-positioning necessary supplies.
- ☐ Review the role of your department or agency during a critical incident, and ensure that your department or agency is prepared to continue performing mission-essential functions following a disaster.
- ☐ Review human resources flexibilities available to assist federal employees affected by severe weather conditions or other emergencies. This may include leave flexibilities, alternative work schedules, telework prior to an evacuation order, evacuation payments, and emergency critical hiring. For emergency guidance memoranda from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), see <http://www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/emerg.asp>.

Following a Disaster:

- ☐ Visit DisasterAssistance.gov for access to disaster help and resources or to complete an online application for disaster assistance.
- ☐ Register yourself as “safe and well” or search for loved ones at www.safeandwell.org (sponsored by the American Red Cross).
- ☐ Federal employees experiencing major losses due to a declared natural disaster may apply for a grant from the Federal Employee Education and Assistance Fund (FEEA). Grant limits are set on a case-by-case or per disaster basis. For more information, see <http://www.feea.org/programs/emergency-assistance/>.

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